

# Features of Teacher's Syncretic Activity in the Conditions of Modern Higher Education

## Características de la actividad sincrética del profesor en las condiciones de la educación superior moderna

**Irina Drozdova**

Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor of Language Training Department, Kharkiv Petro Vasilenko National Technical University of Agriculture. Kharkiv, Ukraine.  
ORCID ID 0000-0002-3384-5216.

**Mariana Sokol**

Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor of Romanic-German Philology Department, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University. Ternopil, Ukraine.  
ORCID ID 0000-0003-3876-026X.

**Herasymchuk Tetiana**

Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Kharkiv National Automobile and Highway University. Kharkiv, Ukraine.  
ORCID ID 0000-0002-1952-4977

**Herasymchuk Volodymyr**

Senior teacher, Kharkiv National University of the Air Force. Kharkiv, Ukraine.  
ORCID ID 0000-0002-1851-4357

**Zhuvanov Artur**

Graduate student, Kharkiv National Automobile and Highway University. Kharkiv, Ukraine.  
ORCID ID 0000-0003-2925-1137

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### \* Correspondence

Email: [irina2017ksada@gmail.com](mailto:irina2017ksada@gmail.com).

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## Abstract

Effective feedback is an art that every leading teacher must improve. The student, who receives excellent feedback during the lesson, walks out of the door feeling confident and motivated for further improving. A student who receives poor feedback will feel the opposite. The feedback should be defined like "great work" with the meaning not only about how to correct the mistakes of students so that they can study in the future without undermining their confidence but also about the modern teacher's role in educational process. The article has been raised the issue of the specific features of the teaching activities, the essence of the concept of "syncretic activity of the teacher" is revealed, in particular the concept of "role functions" is clarified, approaches to interpreting the features of the role functions of a teacher are considered. The main instructions of the teacher which provide the identification of teacher's new qualities in the conditions of modern higher school have been highlighted. The teacher is entrusted with such functions as coordination of educational activities, adjustment of the content of education, counseling, etc. The solution of this problem in terms of personal and professional growth of the teacher has been proposed, which allows to improve the teaching process in higher education. The author's understanding of the main roles of the teacher in higher school has been outlined, the attention on urgent tasks, the features of the role functions of a teacher as syncretic multifunctional interaction between the teacher and the student on preparation of experts for information society has been emphasized. The sequence and priority of the teacher's roles in the syncretic activity in the teaching process have been revealed. The psychological structure of the teacher's syncretic activity has been clarified from the point of view of the requirements for teacher's personality with an explanation of the set of skills that the teacher of a higher education institution should have. The professional skills of the teacher in relation to the peculiarities of his or her activity, which are shown in various types of the teacher's role functions in accordance with the situation and professional tasks of teaching have been analyzed. It has been shown that the transformation of educational activities and role functions of a modern teacher of higher education testifies to constant changes in his personal and professional growth, which also affects the development of the personality of a student - a future professional - in the process of his training.

**Key words:** teacher's personality; syncretic activity; teacher's role functions professional knowledge; socio-professional position.

## Resumen

La retroalimentación efectiva es un arte que todo maestro líder debe mejorar. El estudiante, que recibe excelentes comentarios durante la lección, sale por la puerta sintiéndose confiado y motivado para seguir mejorando. Un estudiante que recibe una mala retroalimentación sentirá lo contrario. La retroalimentación debe definirse como "gran trabajo" con el significado no solo de cómo corregir los errores de los estudiantes para que puedan estudiar en el futuro sin socavar su confianza, sino también sobre el papel del maestro moderno en el proceso educativo. En el artículo se ha planteado el tema de las características específicas de las actividades docentes, se revela la esencia del concepto de "actividad sincrética del docente", en particular se aclara el concepto de "funciones de rol", enfoques para interpretar las características de se consideran las funciones de rol de un maestro. Se han destacado las principales instrucciones del profesor que permiten identificar las nuevas cualidades del profesor en las condiciones de la escuela superior moderna. Al docente se le encomiendan funciones tales como coordinación de las actividades educativas, adecuación de los contenidos de la educación, asesoramiento, etc. Se ha propuesto la solución de este problema en cuanto al crecimiento personal y profesional del docente, lo que permite mejorar el proceso docente en la educación superior. Se ha esbozado la comprensión del autor de los roles principales del docente en la escuela superior, la atención a las tareas urgentes, las características de las funciones del rol del docente como interacción sincrética multifuncional entre el docente y el alumno en la preparación de expertos para la sociedad de la información sido enfatizado. Se ha revelado la secuencia y prioridad de los roles del docente en la actividad sincrética en el proceso de enseñanza. La estructura psicológica de la actividad sincrética del docente se ha aclarado desde el punto de vista de los requisitos de personalidad del docente con una explicación del conjunto de habilidades que debe tener el docente de una institución de educación superior. Se han analizado las competencias profesionales del docente en relación con las peculiaridades de su actividad, que se manifiestan en

diversos tipos de funciones del rol del docente de acuerdo con la situación y tareas profesionales de la docencia. Se ha demostrado que la transformación de las actividades educativas y las funciones de rol de un docente moderno de educación superior atestiguan cambios constantes en su crecimiento personal y profesional, lo que también afecta el desarrollo de la personalidad de un estudiante - un futuro profesional - en el proceso de su formación.

**Palabras clave:** personalidad del profesor; actividad sincrética; el rol del docente funciones conocimiento profesional; puesto socioprofesional.

### **Problem statement in general**

The global problems of modern age are a single, dynamic, constantly changing, open-ended system, since it may include new problems of universal importance, and the previous ones may disappear as they are solved. The global nature of these problems lies, in particular, in the evolution of human thinking and behaviour; improving human qualities; imbalance in the development of the natural, technical and human sciences; the avalanche growth of information and the reform of higher education, the functions of a teacher and student in the educational process (Glazko, 2006).

The development and implementation of a personally oriented model for the development of the role functions of teachers of higher education institutions is one of the most important tasks of higher education in the context of socio-economic reforms. It has been designed to train a highly qualified specialist who can identify sustainable professional knowledge and professionalism in business communication situations and be competitive in the labor market. Well-grounded knowledge in special disciplines contributes to the creative growth of the individual, the formation of a national and professional mentality of a person.

Considering the specifics of modern vocational education in higher education, the latest developments in society and experimental approaches to relevant fields of science have been taken into account. Nevertheless, it is also important that university education should be fundamental and holistic, strong enough ground for a scientific worldview and an active life position. For the last 6-10 years, the higher education system of Ukraine has been in a crisis state, which is associated with the choice of new optimal ways to develop higher education. These crises are due to the demands of the time and market economy, so reform of higher education and the entire education system is inevitable, which indicates irreversible variable phenomena in many social processes.

Among the many factors that determine the success of students in higher education is the personality of the teacher of higher education. Since he is the teacher who forms the future specialist, because it is known that only a person can educate a person. Therefore, a modern teacher should carry out activities that extend the usual translation of knowledge and the formation of the necessary professional skills and skills among students in the learning process, contribute to the formation of professional qualities and the development of the creative personality of the future specialist.

### **The aim of the study**

The following tasks have been defined according to the purposes of research:

1. To analyze and systematize the features of professional-role functions of a high school teacher in accordance with the general requirements of society for the training of a qualified specialist.
2. To find out the role of the teacher's personality and his syncretic activity and to analyze the components of the teacher's role functions in preparing students in order to form a specialty in modern conditions.
3. To summarize research developments and identify prospects for further research into the professional activities of the teacher's personality from the perspective of a role-based approach.

### **The methodology of the research**

The theoretical and practical study of the problem allows forming the author's concept of research on continuity, the syncretic nature of the situational application of role actions of teachers during

student training. The application of teaching activity role transformations in practice is possible in the process of implementing systemic, cognitive-communicative, competent-activity, professionally and personally oriented approaches to training. This requires substantiation of the latest criteria for the content, methods and forms of organization of practical work on the development of professional training of students for future work in the specialty.

### **The main material of the research**

Models of people behavior in communication are the generalized, schematically expressed characteristics of communicative actions. In these models, the teacher finds expression of his socio-professional position. Moreover, in the pedagogical literature there is a wide variety of typologies of the professional roles of the teacher.

Scientists have been revealed and quite thoroughly clarified the specifics of competent qualities and professional roles of a teacher in traditional, sustainable training (S. Vitvitskaya (2006), A. Gura (2008), S. Courland (2007), A. Moskalenko (2016), R. Khmelyuk (2007) and others. In recent years, the classification of pedagogical communication styles according to the typology of professional positions of teachers, proposed by M. Talen (Stolyarenko, 2004), has become widespread. As a result, the teacher is based on his needs, and not on the needs of students. The attention of "Manager", "Coach", "Guide", etc have been outlined among the interesting models of teachers' behavior in pedagogical communication. Such models of behavior have strongly pronounced role characteristics of teachers pedagogical influence on students personal qualities (Stolyarenko (2004), pp. 553 – 554].

However, the role functions of a teacher of a higher school is training as a qualified, competitive specialist in a modern information society. Such notion have just started to be investigated or described about a separate role position of a facilitator teacher, in particular in the works of S. Vasiliev (2015), A. Kudryashova and N. Gorbatov (2015), O. Levchenko (2008), S. Melnik (2011) and others. Actually, all the role functions of teaching have been generalized and reduced to one thing - facilitatively, not taking into account the richness and branching of certain methods, techniques and means of learning, the level of proficiency of which depends on the level of pedagogical skill of the teacher and the effectiveness of the educational process.

Analysis of the scientific literature allows concluding that there is no single systematic and extended description of the personality of a teacher of higher education; secondly, the role functions of the teacher are so flexible and variable that they can be combined in interconnected, syncretic activities, built because of traditional and latest approaches to training.

Thus, in the context of the transformation of modern society, the challenges and consequences of global problems, in particular socio-economic, environmental and health-saving (due to a planetary pandemic), the problem of determining the role functions of a teacher at a higher school of Ukraine remains extremely urgent. Because it would adequately correspond to the conditions of personal growth and professional functioning of a specialist.

The importance of the teacher as the most important authority and former of the professional qualities of the student, his professional culture and professional competence, the formation of the personality of the future specialist, ideology and even his norms of behavior cannot be overestimated. It is necessary to take into account an important point in the psychology of influence: the most strongly influenced not by the message of the word, but by the communicant himself as a real person, enters the sphere of life of the recipient (Drozdova, 2010). Persuasiveness, erudition, democracy and teacher's tact are favorable factors.

The "product" of the university teacher's activity is a student who, in accordance with the new requirements for the quality of professional training, has become an active subject of the educational process in higher education institutions (Petryk, 2013).

The professional role of a teacher (a set of regulatory approved requirements for the professional behavior of the teacher) has been determined by his leading role as the leader and

organizer of the educational process, translator of the cultural and linguistic picture of the world, etc. (Ushatikova 2013, c. 36).

Working with a student – an adult – the teacher considers this and appeals to his ability to decide think, create his own life position, form a worldview. Therefore, the influence on students (contact factor), the improvement of its forms and techniques, accounting and reliance on it, that is, the conditions for intensifying training as a means of forming the personality of a professional is the most important link of the educational process (Dichkivskaya I.M., 2004).

The concept of approximating the content and forms of practical teaching of a foreign language in a higher school to future professional activity takes into account the main provisions of the philosophy of higher education and is based on a systematic approach. The effectiveness of the developing process of the students professional skills depends on the extent to which the methodology and content of practical language education outlines the specifics of the student's future specialty. The complexity and originality of this process lies in professional activity of freelance students and is characterized by versatility, which requires various forms of practical training.

### **General Background**

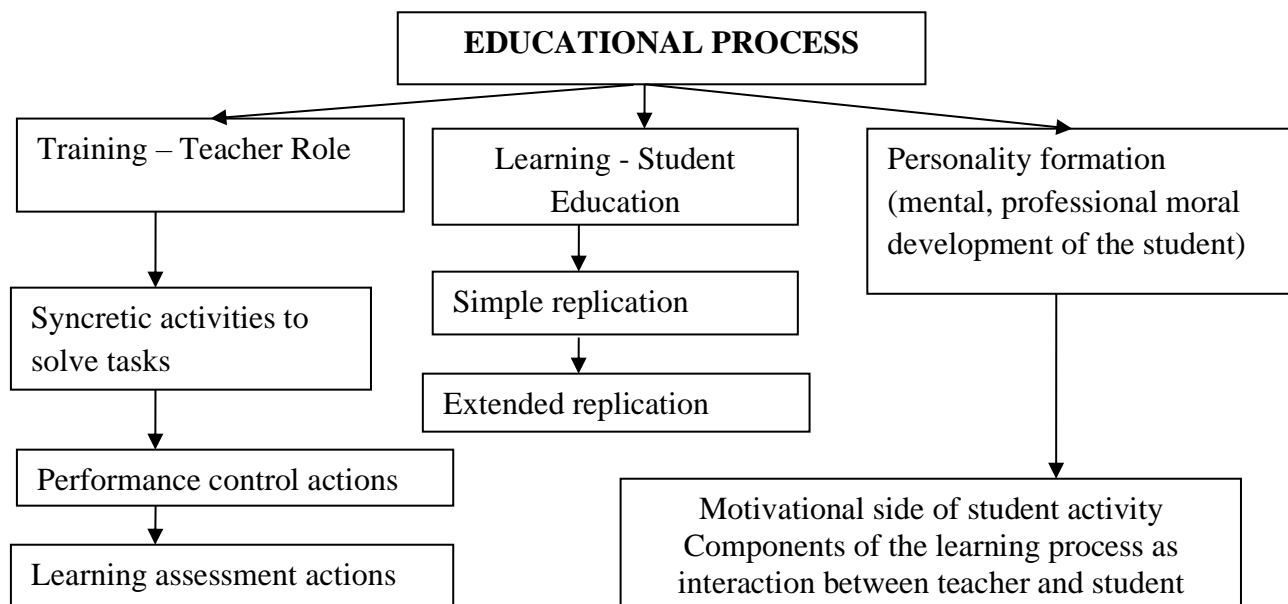
The new possibilities of higher education allow each student to work at an individual pace. Experience shows that the use of the full range of various role functions of the teacher increases interest in studying special disciplines as a means of obtaining a chosen profession, since it allows us to adapt the educational process even in poorly trained students. Therefore, much in the teacher's work depends on the teacher's personal abilities, his professional and general training, pedagogical skill and intuition, plays a significant role in intensifying the educational process (S. Courland, R. Khmelyuk, A. Semenova, etc., 2007).

The development of the role functions of teaching is productive implementation of a syncretic approach. It is a specific activity based on principles such as functional and communicative; integration; system organization of training; commitment and consistency; high efficiency of each type of work, finding implementation in the system of practical knowledge; actual general education training and the individual characteristics of students of institutions of higher education etc.

The teacher's syncretic activity involves preliminary psychological and pedagogical training, extensive work experience and high professional, organizational, communicative, managerial and personal qualities.

The effectiveness of training has been ensured by submitting the system of educational tasks as a system of problem situations and achieving maximum involvement of students in their solution. It is achieved by the methodology of conducting classes and fulfilling all the involved role functions of the teacher in his syncretic activities. Given process can be described as multifunctional contact interaction (as opposed to authoritarian style).

Figure 1 illustrates the learning process with the implementation of role functions in the interaction of the teacher and the student.



**Figure 1.**

Therefore, in order to form a creative specialist with a high level of professional development, it is necessary to maximize the involvement and implementation of special role functions of the teacher in the process of training students in the specialty. The motivational side of student activity has been achieved by solving the problem, formed as "I-inclusion" (Ollport G., (1998), p.232) in the educational situation. A properly selected approach to the student, taking into account his personality and a set of educational tasks will help teachers to solve this problem. As noted, the main goal and duty of the teacher is to arm each person in a life struggle for clarity of mind (Moren E., 2007; page 35).

A research of the pedagogical process on the implementation of the role functions of a teacher in the educational process has been carried out during 2019 - 2020 years based on Kharkiv Petro Vasilenko National Technical University of Agriculture, Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts, Kharkiv National Automobile and Highway University in several stages of scientific search. The research work has been involved 102 teachers. The results of the experiment (questionnaires, surveys and interviewing teachers) indicate the importance of professional verbal-non-verbal role detection and its informativity.

The method of processing the questionnaires of teachers with the survey has been included deciphering, subsequent classification of factual material, analysis of answers and conclusions on the content.

Thus, teachers identified the main roles of the teacher in the educational process. There are following functions for each of them:

1. Planner. The complex strategic role of the teacher provides planning of classes, the procedural two-way nature of the joint activities of the teacher and the student; identification of the types of interaction between students; a set of techniques and methods; design and organization of the process; availability of comfortable conditions for training (Drozdova, 2010). While preparing for the educational process, the teacher relies on a careful selection of educational and methodological literature and its provision for students for its correct application in classroom and independent work.

2. Manager / coordinator. The teacher embodies the complex and most important role in learning, organizes and coordinates the learning process on an individual schedule, manages the conduct of individual and group classes; checks students' compliance with control measures (incoming, current and final control), etc. The manager is responsible for the correct beginning and

accurate completion of training activities, competent feedback. The teacher cannot force the student to study independently, but he creates the most favorable conditions for organizing and controlling his independent work; increases motivation for high-quality performance of tasks, to identify hidden abilities and creative opportunities of students.

3. The controller is a teacher who is fully responsible for the lessons in the classroom, what students do, what and how they say. The teacher-controller shows the ability to update the necessary professional knowledge in the educational situation; assumes this role, especially important when new educational material is introduced and clear control over the exact reproduction of techniques and its processing is required. In this role, the teacher is the center of attention and the center of the lesson, he may have an outstanding talent for teaching, good knowledge and rich experience, but the role functions of the teacher-controller will be limited and monotonous.

4. Facilitator is a mediator who helps students, supports, encourages effective (corrects ineffective) behavior; finds and activates constructive models of behavior in intragroup interaction; accompanies the process of developing new experiences in students (Volkova, Stepanova, (2018), Levchenko OO, (2008)).

5. The teacher as a resource is a potential center, ready to offer students immediate support or help, which they lack performing communication during training. These role functions of the teacher involve the use of available resources, such as the Internet. However, it is necessary to ensure that students rely on the teacher to work independently.

6. Analyst – the role of a teacher consists of direct work with students, identifying difficulties and problems that arise in teaching. The teacher diagnoses his activities to adjust and monitor the independent work of students, distributed in individualized and distance learning.

7. Evaluator. In this role, the teacher determines the successfulness of students and the quality of their learning outcomes. The teacher provides feedback and corrects the activities of students, evaluates their independent work, performance of various tasks. However, empathic support should be kept in mind so that the student's self-esteem and confidence in acquiring knowledge are not affected, which will greatly affect the learning process. The task of the teacher is to diagnose and evaluate the performance of independent written work with their mandatory commenting, making adjustments to the entire learning process.

8. Expert consultant. This is the usual formalized role in the interaction of teacher and student. The expert-consultant not only assesses the level of students' knowledge with the help of various tasks and tests, but also coordinates the cognitive process of students and conducting group and individual consultations, communicative classes, etc. In this function, the teacher does not teach the material (it is in textbooks, manuals), but gives explanations, consultations on the best mastery of the material, ensuring the correct use of educational and methodological literature in the student's specialty. The consultant may be a mentor in individual work with the student or in groups of 5 to 10 students.

9. Rapport builder. The teacher is always in the process of building relationships with students: both during classes (in the audience) and outside the audience. Without this, it is impossible to build a working atmosphere in learning and create a trusting relationship with students. Rapport builder always takes into account the level of training of students, has an individual approach to each of them. In the process of building a relationship between a teacher and a student, it is impossible to "paternalistic" communication between students during classes, since all students are individuals who deserve respect. The teacher, considering the complex requirements of the information society, not only will not show irritation or annoyance when the student is guilty, but also at the right time will come to the student's aid – he will calm down and cheer up and help to deal with educational material. In particular, in the system of teaching the second foreign language, Rapport builder is the first and main source of correct speech for the student.

10. Prompter. The teacher encourages students to participate in communication and makes suggestions on how they can continue their activities. The teacher should help students only if

necessary. The functions of the teacher are correction of errors, hints and help in choosing the right word or grammatical construction, term, formula, concept, etc. Students can sometimes be confused, lose the thread of answer or be uncertain how to proceed; the teacher will support, guide the course of thoughts in the right direction.

11. Participant and observer. This role contributes to a better atmosphere in the classroom, is an excellent way to interact with students, when the teacher participates in the work of students, without dominating the activities during its implementation. The teacher as a participant and observer now not only monitors the activities of students, but also catches mistakes, corrects them during classes. The teacher helps to perform intensive educational work in the classroom, if he is able to keep pace in the classroom and not become the center of attention, because of his authority.

12. Parent-friend / mentor / advisor. This role of the teacher is very important and complex; the functions in this case will be related to the coordination of support for the educational activities of students during extracurricular independent work. The teacher-advisor should not be the student's best friend. Moreover, such teacher is not obliged to replace his relatives; but also he cannot completely ignore a student as a person. This teacher function assists the student in solving a controversial problem, providing the right advice and support if it is necessary to express sympathy and understanding.

13. Practitioner. This is a very broad function. The teacher not only conducts classes and provides scientific and methodological assistance to students in their studies; but also ensures the correct organization and control of independent work, the effective use of educational and methodological literature. The practitioner is able to respond quickly and adequately to changes in the situation during classes, in closer communication providing the students with the necessary information. During the internship, the teacher has the opportunity to transfer the professional skills to students, to help to apply theoretical knowledge in practice; find and indicate ways to solve specific problems; show a real picture and explain the specifics of work in the chosen specialty, thus preparing the student for the realities of future work.

14. Tutor. The teacher performs coaching functions when students participate in project work or self-study provides advice and recommendations, helps students to find ideas and identify tasks. This role allows the best way to pay individual attention to each individual student to meet his or her specific learning needs and research interests. However, it can also greatly affect the student's independent decisions; he will become too dependent on one teacher or one method or style of communication and teaching. The tutor can sometimes combine the functions of a leader, manager, consultant and he is addressed to as an authoritative source of information, as an expert.

Teachers who has bene participated in the questionnaire and survey distributed the percentages by role function as follows (see Table 1).

**Table 1.**

Nº	Role of Teacher	%
1.	Planner	19
2.	Manager / coordinator	24
3.	controller	21
4.	Facilitator	6
5.	The teacher as a resource	6
6.	Analyst	7
7.	Evaluator	6
8.	Expert consultant	9
9.	Rapport builder	8
10.	Prompter	5
11.	Participant and observer	5
12.	Parent-friend/ mentor / advisor	2
13.	Practitioner	5
14.	Tutor	3



Thus, it becomes clear that the modern approach to teaching involves fundamental changes in the basic functions of the teacher in the educational process. In particular, it provides for an expansion of the roles of the teacher compared to the traditional approach to learning. However, all teachers in the questionnaires noted the multifunctionality of their activities, and its syncretic nature.

All teachers have been noted that the role functions are unlimited; they are constantly changing, depending on the tasks, goals and types of methodological work. The paradigm and their significance has been determined, due to the predominance in their methodological activities depending on many aspects: age and seniority, the peculiarity of the subject taught, the changing types and forms of work in higher school, the requirements of society and so on.

However, the predominant distribution of functional responsibilities of the teacher (64%) has been associated with organizational (planning, management) activities. Only 36% - with corrective, consulting, other functions of teaching in the specialty of the student, and 20% of them – with practical speech activity, only one-fifth is focused on the creative activity of the teacher.

It can be seen that within the framework of innovative technologies, taking into account the modern challenges of time and the tasks of the information society to a qualified, competitive specialist, the main task is precisely the flexible syncretic activity of the teacher. This involves radical changes in the form of cooperation between teachers and students, since there are wide discussions of current results in the group. Training tasks, "brainstorming", reports, speeches take on a different character, which is associated with both the latest changes in higher education and changes in forms of education: individual, remote, other types of computerized training. Therefore, the teacher has high professional and business requirements: he must have not only the skills of scientific, pedagogical, methodological activities; he should have communicative, organizational, managerial skills and qualities and so on.

## Conclusions and prospects for further studying

Therefore, the transformation of educational activities and role functions of a modern teacher of higher education testifies to constant changes in his personal and professional growth, which also affects the development of the student's personality – the future professional – in the process of his training.

The presented research materials of the article have been based on the implementation of the role functions of a teacher in syncretic activities for the formation of future specialists. The examples of their use in higher education correspond to real trends in the development of modern Ukrainian education and are promising. The study has been identified a number of issues that require special study. Scientific work on improving the syncretic role of the teacher should be aimed at studying, for example, such problematic issues as:

- the peculiarities of the system of teaching methods of students depending on their further specialization;
- the application of research methods in the process of assisting students to carry out their course and thesis work;
- the use of modern working methods taking into account the distance nature of educational activities and etc.

Taking into consideration a syncretic and open nonequilibrium system in the complex conditions of a globalized world, the prospect of further research is the detailed definition of the role functions of the teacher in the educational process for their necessary correction and constant transformation depending on society and the labor market.

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